



# Los Angeles County Commission on Local Governmental Services

383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
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Los Angeles, California 90012  
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## MINUTES

March 1, 2005 Meeting  
846 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

**Chairperson**  
Richard J. Rosenthal, CRE  
**Vice-Chairperson**  
Patricia G. Gray  
Wendy M. Brogin,  
A.I.C.P.  
Walter P. Coombs  
Shana E. Epstein.  
Gordon Gray  
Rodrigo A. Guerra, Jr.  
Algird Leiga  
Sharon Martinez  
Deborah H. O'Connor  
Kenneth D. Rozell  
William Selditz  
David Spence  
Terri Tippet  
Benjamin "Frank" Venti

Chairperson Rosenthal called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

### APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 1, 2005 MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Gray, seconded by Commissioner Leiga, the Commission unanimously approved the February, 2005 Minutes.

### CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chairperson Rosenthal reported that beginning next month the meeting will be held in Sybil Brand Conference Room 372.

### DISCUSSION WITH THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT REGARDING THE WIRELESS '911' RESPONSE SYSTEM AND PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINTS (PSAP)

Chairperson Rosenthal introduced Lieutenant James Thornton. Chairperson Rosenthal requested the speakers highlight any insights to a new system, update on their plans and how the Sheriff is handling their calls now.

Lieutenant Thornton introduced Sergeant Fernando Vasquez and Tom Cueves PSAP Manager. Lieutenant Thornton stated the Department had a pilot project in place at the Temple Station for a period of six months from 1999 to 2000. This was Phase 1 of the project. Chairperson Rosenthal asked if during the pilot program they were able to separate the sectors on a tower. Mr. Cueves reported during the pilot project they could only locate the cell tower. At present due to technology advances they can pinpoint the sector. Lieutenant Thornton stated now the cell sites are divided into 3 sectors.

Lieutenant Thornton reported that the Department continues to monitor technology updates and wireless service providers' development. The Department's goal is to implement the '911' Response System for the 19 designated locations at the same time since the Department does not have a centralized dispatch center like LAPD and the CHP.

Lieutenant Thornton met with LAPD, CHP, Beverly Hills, Torrance and the South Bay Cities that had implemented 911 Response Systems. The cities' overall volume increase was much higher than the anticipated 10% increase. The City of Beverly Hills had a 20%+ increase. Lieutenant Thornton reported the cities faced two problems: training protocol and implementation protocol. The State does not have a protocol for training or implementation of PSAP plan. Chairperson Rosenthal asked if it is too late to implement a training protocol. Lieutenant Thornton stated it is not too late. Chairperson Rosenthal asked about the Department's standardized training. Lieutenant Thornton stated the Sheriff's Department does not have a protocol for centralized dispatch system. Each agency can adopt the basic training guidelines and tailor to their needs.

Commissioner Gray asked if liaisons for each agency meet regularly. Chairperson Rosenthal stated that they do. Chairperson Rosenthal stated cell sites don't handle all providers. Providers have different cell sites and calls are received by different agencies because of cell sites. If a sector is LAPD then all calls received by the specific sector will be routed to LAPD. Commissioner Leiga stated overlap is an issue and a reasonable protocol must be in place to deal with this issue. In the past, these issues were resolved based on physical location. Lieutenant Thornton stated a meeting should be held with the cities involved and a consensus established between them regarding boundaries. Chairperson Rosenthal asked if under the new system, when a call is transferred to another agency does the agency receive all the information. Mr. Cueves stated the receiving agency gets all the information.

Lieutenant Thornton stated LAPD planned to begin its '911' Response System in January 2005. It was delayed to March 2005 and then possibly to July 2005. LAPD's dispatch system is very different from the Sheriff's dispatch system but the Department is eager to learn about LAPD's experience.

Chairperson Rosenthal asked what kind of unique staffing problem the Department would encounter with 19 PSAPs. Efficiency would be a problem due to staff being located at different stations. Lieutenant Thornton stated that the Department is still in the process of assessing staffing issues. Trained staffs are assigned to desk operations but deputies injured in line of duty are assigned to desk operations for a short period of time. A significant increase of all '911' calls 35% is expected. The Department responded to 900,000 '911' calls last year. The Department on average receives about 3,000 '911' cell calls a month or about 36,000 calls a year.

Lieutenant Thornton stated some stations are busier than other stations. A deciding factor regarding staff needs would be the number of '911' calls each station receives. Commissioner Leiga asked if the Sheriff Department has a Performance Standard for dispatchers responding to '911' calls. Lieutenant Thornton stated that information is not available to him, currently. According to State statistics from November 2003-04 the volume of wireless '911' calls increased from 50,000 to 250,000 calls in LA County. Commissioner Leiga stated the number of people using cellular telephones is increasing and the number of people using landlines is decreasing. Lieutenant Thornton stated people electing to cancel their landline telephone should realize during an emergency they are losing the ability to receive immediate help due to time needed to pinpoint their location. Commissioner Leiga inquired about transferring calls. Mr. Cueves stated when a call is received it is answered within 7 seconds, when a call is transferred it takes 3-5 seconds, and the ambiguity of boundary areas makes jurisdictional decision-making difficult. For example, on certain streets, one side of the street is the Department's jurisdiction and the other side is the LAPD's. On average, the total time frame is 30 seconds.

Lieutenant Thornton stated the Department is trying to ascertain the number of cellular telephones in the market without the GPS system. Commissioner Coombs asked regarding financial arrangement required to run the '911' Response System Project. Lieutenant Thornton stated State provides money for mapping and technology but not for staffing. Commissioner Coombs asked about the tax paid on telephone bills and cellular telephone bills. Mr. Cueves stated the tax is applied toward technology and equipment. Chairperson Rosenthal stated a huge gap exists between funding for staff and funding for equipment.

Chairperson Rosenthal offered the Commission's assistance and asked if staffing or technology is a major concern? Lieutenant Thornton stated the technology is available, the recommendation to move forward has been given, and whether staffing is an issue is still unknown.

Chairperson Rosenthal recommended conducting a pilot program using a busy station to evaluate how the system works in the Department. Lieutenant Thornton stated he would recommend the pilot project but the ultimate decision rests with Department Executives. Commissioner Spence asked the names of senior management staff in charge of decision making for the project. Lieutenant Thornton stated Under Sheriff Waldy, Assistant Sheriffs Tanaka and Campbell, Commander Seleda and Chief Aranda. Commissioner Spence asked if the Department received any 911 funding from Homeland Security. Lieutenant Thornton stated according to his information the Department did not receive any funding. Lieutenant Thornton stated a Departmental Executive meeting is scheduled for the end of March and that he would keep the Commission informed.

Vice Chairperson Gray invited Captain Andy Smith and the Chairperson invited Jim Edwards to April 5, 2005 meeting.

#### **UPDATE ON CALTRANS PROJECT**

Chairperson Rosenthal reported that Commissioner Leiga is the new Chairperson of the Caltrans Committee. Commissioner Guerra is the Vice-Chairperson of the Caltrans Committee. Commissioners Brogin, Spence and O' Connor are appointed to the Caltrans Committee.

#### **STUDY COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE STATUS REPORT**

Chairperson Rosenthal spoke about the Commission's brochure. Chairperson Rosenthal requested Commissioners O' Connor, Spence and Venti contact the Executive Director of their organizations to submit comments about the Commission's work with the possibility of incorporating letters from their organizations in Commission's Five Year Sunset Review.

#### **MATTERS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA (TO BE PRESENTED AND PLACED ON THE AGENDA FOR A FUTURE MEETING)**

There were none.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were none.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

##### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Wendy Brogin  
Walter Coombs  
Gordon Gray  
Patricia Gray  
Rodrigo A. Guerra, Jr.  
Algird Leiga  
Richard Rosenthal  
Kenneth D. Rozell  
William Selditz  
David Spence

##### **MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Deborah H. O' Connor  
Shana E. Epstein  
Sharon Martinez  
Terri Tippit.  
Frank Venti

##### **STAFF**

Martha Littlefield  
Peter Papadakis  
Garen Khachian

#### **GUESTS**

Lieutenant James Thornton, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department  
Sergeant Fernando Vasquez, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department  
Tom Cueves, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (PSAP Manager)